

The Salt Lake Tribune

American Heritage School bringing Broadway star home for Christmas

By David Burger

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Green River native and veteran Broadway performer Dallyn Vail Bayles will bring his full-bodied voice to Utah on Saturday, Dec. 11, for the American Heritage School's annual Christmas concert.

During a recent interview, Bayles said he hasn't forgotten the Utah teacher who influenced him and helped him reach The Great White Way.

"I had a wonderful music and drama teacher in high school," Bayles said of Jessica Jenkins at Green River High School. "She's the reason why I'm doing what I'm doing."

When Bayles was in ninth grade, Jenkins took her students to the Capitol Theatre in Salt Lake City to see a production of "Les Misérables." Bayles remembers being mesmerized.

Constant inspiration in high school led him to a career in show business. The Broadway veteran, who now lives in New York City, recently finished a national tour of "The Phantom of the Opera" as the Phantom understudy. Before that was Enjolras with the Broadway tour of "Les Misérables."

In Utah and among those of the Mormon faith, Bayles is best known for portraying Hyrum Smith in "Joseph Smith: The Prophet of the Restoration" and "Emma Smith: My Story," two films produced by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Saturday's concerts will benefit the American Heritage School in American Fork. Founded in 1970, the school has become one of the largest Mormon-centric schools in the world. Besides regular classroom instruction for children in kindergarten through 12th grade, the school hosts the American Heritage Lyceum Philharmonic and American Heritage Youth Chorus. Both groups will perform Saturday with Bayles.

Under the leadership of conductor Kayson Brown, the Lyceum Philharmonic is one of only two orchestras in the country invited to perform at the 2010 American String Teachers Association National Conference.

The two concerts will show a devotion to faith, Brown said.

"It sets us apart from others that aren't as focused on Christ or the divine hand in creating our nation," he added. "We don't have to be bashful about singing about Christ."

It will be a spirited, joyful program and won't give you the feeling of being at a Mormon sacrament meeting, Brown said.

The concert also will honor Janice Kapp Perry for "her innumerable contributions to sacred music," Brown said. It will feature a 75-voice choir and an audition-only orchestra with 75 instrumentalists.

It's only the third year of the benefit concerts — which fund the school's music programs — but demand for tickets is so high, a matinee was added. Last year's concert sold out.

Brown has worked on several projects with Bayles and is happy to have him headline the event. "It's fun to see a local boy make it big."

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An American Heritage Christmas

Broadway veteran Dallyn Vail Bayles performs a benefit concert with the American Heritage Lyceum Philharmonic and American Heritage Youth Chorus.

When • Saturday, Dec. 11, at 2 and 7:30 p.m.

Where • American Heritage School, 736 N. 1100 East, American Fork



Green River native Dallyn Vail Bayles is the featured performer at the American Heritage Christmas concert.

Tickets • \$16 in advance, \$18 at the door (matinee), \$20 at the door (evening); 801-642-0055 or www.americanheritage.org

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